

## Omega-3 Fatty Acids in the Treatment of Depression

number

10/068039

FILED  
FEBRUARY 6, 2002

11/10/04  
This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application entitled "Omega-3 Fatty Acids and Omega-3 Phosphatidylcholine in the Treatment of Bipolar Disorder", filed February 5, 2002, using Express Mail No.: ET796587916US, which is a  
5 continuation of U.S. Serial No. 09/269,361, filed March 22, 1999, now issued as US Patent No. 6,344,482, which claims priority from PCT/US97/06712, filed April 23, 1997. The contents of all of these applications are incorporated herein by reference.

### Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to medical treatments for psychiatric disorders.

- 10 More specifically, it is concerned with novel methods and compositions for treating patients with unipolar major depression.

### Background of the Invention

Major depression is a neuropsychiatric illness characterized by a persistently low mood or diminished interests in one's surroundings, accompanied by at least several of  
15 the following symptoms: Reduced energy and motivation, difficulty concentrating, altered sleep and appetite, and at times, suicidal ideation (American Psychiatric Association: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, ed. 4. Washington, American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Major depression without a history of abnormally elevated mood and energy (mania) is termed "unipolar major depression."

- 20 However, a sizeable proportion of depressed patients presenting for treatment have bipolar disorder (also known as manic depressive illness), where there is a history of mania, or a milder form of mood elevation known as hypomania (Goodwin FK, Jamison KR: *Manic Depressive Illness*. London, Oxford University Press, 1990). Whether part of a unipolar or a bipolar illness, major depression is associated with high rates of  
25 morbidity and mortality, with suicide rates of 10-25% (Kaplan HI, Sadock BJ (eds): *Synopsis of Psychiatry*. Baltimore, Williams & Wilkins, 1998, p. 866). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), major depression is the fourth leading cause of